

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

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FM AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5610

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L THE HAGUE 1723

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NATO, NL

SUBJECT: LABOR PARTY CONGRESS: PARTY LEADERS TAKE UP

CUDGELS FOR NATO

REF: THE HAGUE A-55

1. DUTCH LABOR PARTY (PVDA), LARGEST PARTY IN THE COUNTRY
AND LEADING PARTNER IN THE FIVE-PARTY CENTER-LEFT COALITION
GOVERNMENT, WILL HOLD CONGRESS ON "PEACE AND SECURITY"
APRIL 10-12 IN AMSTERDAM. CONGRESS WILL COLMINATE TWO-
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YEARS OF STUDY AND DEBATE WITHIN PVDA ON FUTURE ROLE

NETHERLANDS SHOULD OR SHOULD NOT PLAY WITHIN NATO.
GIVEN IMPORTANCE OF LABOR PARTY IN DUTCH POLITICAL LIFE,
OUTCOME OF CONGRESS IS CERTAIN TO SIGNIFICANTLY INFLUENCE
DUTCH PUBLIC OPINION REGARDING NATO AND COULD AFFECT FUTURE
GON POLICIES AND ACTIONS REGARDING ALLIANCE.

2. DURING LONG STUDY PERIOD WHICH SAW PARTY MEMBERSHIP
POLLED ON VARIOUS ASPECTS OF NETHERLANDS' RELATIONSHIP
TO NATO AND DISCUSSION SESSIONS HELD IN ALL PVDA LOCAL
CHAPTERS, PARTY LEADERSHIP TOOK NO ACTIVE ROLE. NOW THAT
CONGRESS APPROACHING, AND WITH DRAFT RESOLUTION PREPARED
BY PARTY EXECUTIVE BOARD IN HAND, PVDA CABINET MINISTERS
ARE BEGINNING SPEAK OUT.

3. FONMIN VAN DER STOEL, AS REPORTED REPAIR, HAS ALREADY
MADE BASIC CASE FOR MAINTAINING NATO MEMBERSHIP. DEFMIN
VREDELING, ADDRESSING LOCAL PARTY GATHERING APRIL 2, SAID
CONTINUED NATO MEMBERSHIP ONLY WAY FOR HOLLAND TO SAFE-
GUARD ITS SECURITY." IN ABSENCE OF A BETTER SECURITY
SYSTEM, OUR ROLE IN NATO IS BEST POSSIBLE WAY TO CHANNEL
EFFORTS AIMED AT ACHIEVING MORE STABLE RELATIONS AND GREATER
SECURITY". ADMITTING THAT CERTAIN ASPECTS OF U.S. FOREIGN
AND DOMESTIC POLICY WERE DIFFICULT FOR HIM TO SWALLOW, A
FAVORITE THEME OF DUTCH LEFT-WINGERS WHO WOULD BREAK NATO
TIES, VREDELING SAID THAT WATERGATE OUTCOME HAD STRENGTHEND
HIS CONFIDENCE IN U.S.

4. PRIMIN DEN UYL SPOKE OUT FOR FIRST TIME ON SUBJECT
APRIL 3 AT A PVDA MEETING IN GOUDA. BILLED AS A PROGRESS
REPORT ON HIS GOVERNMENT, DEN UYL USED OCCASION TO MAKE
STRONG APPEAL TO PARTY NOT TO DESTROY GOVERNMENT ON NATO
ISSUE. CALLING NATO VITAL IN MAINTAINING EAST-WEST
BALANCE, DEN UYL SAID GON HAD BEEN AND WOULD CONTINUE TO
BE CRITICAL ALLY, AS PROMISED IN PROGRESSIVE PARTIES'
1972 ELECTION MANIFESTO. NETHS COULD ONLY FULFILL THIS
ROLE IF THERE NO DOUBT AS TO ITS COMMITMENT TO ALLIANCE
AS INSTRUMENT FOR DETENTE.

5. PRIMIN'S SPEECH, PLUS ACTIVE ROLES BEING TAKEN BY
VAN DER STOEL AND VREDLING, INDICATE THAT LEADERSHIP
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PREPARED CONFRONT PARTY LEFT-WING ON NATO ISSUE AT
CONGRESS. DEN UYL WILL, IF HE MUST, MAKE CONTINUATION OF
HIS GOVERNMENT THE ISSUE. SHOULD PVDA GO TOO FAR IN
PROPOSING THAT GON CONDITION ITS NATO MEMBERSHIP,
CONTINUATION OF GOVERNMENT WILL CERTAINLY BE IN DOUBT
AS CONFESSORIAL PARTIES IN COALITION HAVE MADE CLEAR.
GIVEN DESIRE OF PVDA MEMBERSHIP TO REMAIN IN POWER FOR
FULFILLMENT OF THEIR DOMESTIC PROGRAMS, AND REALIZATION,

AT LEAST BY SOME, THAT AN ELECTION ON NATO ISSUE WOULD DO THEM LITTLE GOOD, AND COULD IN FACT REVIVE SICK CONFESSIONALS, MOST OBSERVERS BELIEVE LEADERSHIP WILL BE ABLE TO LIMIT DAMAGE THAT FAR LEFT IN PARTY WOULD LIKE TO DO TO DUTCH NATO POLICY.

6. BECAUSE PVDA CONGRESSES TEND BE UNPREDICTABLE, HOWEVER, THERE NO REAL ASSURANCE THAT MATTERS WILL NOT GET OUT OF HAND. CONGRESS WILL CONSIST OF SOME 1500 DELEGATES, MANY OF WHOM WILL BE YOUNG ACTIVISTS WHO WILL NOT BE SATISFIED SETTLE FOR BLAND RESOLUTION. FURTHER COMPLICATING FACTORS INCLUDE SITUATION IN INDO-CHINA (U.S. RESUPPLY OPERATIONS WILL PROVOKE CRITICISM OF USG AND WILL RUB OFF ON NATO) AND RECOMMENDATION OF CONSORTIUM DEFMIN FOR SELECTION OF F-16, WHICH MANY DELEGATES (SPURRED ON BY PVDA PARLIAMENTARY GROUP) WILL SEE AS WASTEFUL AND A CONSEQUENCE OF GON'S MEMBERSHIP IN NATO.
TANGUY

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